

**City of New Castle Delaware  
City Council Special Meeting  
201 Delaware Street, New Castle  
Wednesday, April 6, 2016 – 6:30 p.m.**

**Call to order: 6:30 p.m.**

**Roll Call:**

Councilperson Megginson – present  
Councilperson Vannucci – present  
Council President Ratchford - present  
Councilperson Petty - present  
Councilperson Di Mondì - absent

Also present:

William Barthel, City Administrator  
Daniel Losco, City Solicitor  
Leila Hamroun, Architect

President Ratchford stated this would be a Special meeting to discuss the Historic Review Guidelines and for the first reading of a proposed Ordinance regarding zoning in the Downtown Gateway zone.

President Ratchford gave a brief background on the Historic Review Guidelines

- There has been a committee working with the Architect to update the Historic Area Guidelines.
- There have been regular meetings, and public comment.
- It is important to have the City's history preserved, but it is also important to streamline and update the process.
- Council has passed an Ordinance allowing the Historic Area Commission to change their guidelines.

Leila Hamroun gave an overview of the Guidelines:

- The Goals they wanted to implement were to streamline the process for applicants, information readily available in a user friendly format that allows for updates, and also to address the use of alternate materials.
- This documents represents input from City Administration, City Council, the Building Code official, the Historic Area Commission, the Historic Area Review Commission and public consultations that came through five public meetings, emails and letters.

The review was twofold, to review the process, and the standards and guidelines.

- It was important to clarify the process, and also address simple requests, that could be approved without going through the entire process. Based on the significance of the building, the scope of the work, and the visibility from the public right of way HARC

proposed a tiered review system. In some cases HAC certificates can be approved by the Building Official, in other cases it would go to the whole Commission.

- One comment that came to HARC was there was a need for a clear understanding of what is needed to submit an application for a review. There is also the addition of a pre-application consultation, to help residents with the application process.

Leila Hamroun reviewed terminology, such as Key Building, Contributing and Non-Contributing buildings and what types of work needs to go to the Committee, and what can be approved at the staff level.

Leila Hamroun summarized the process, they listened to what people had to say, tried to provide a user friendly system, they tried to develop a system that was respectful of the uniqueness of New Castle.

President Ratchford thanked all the people who worked on the guidelines.

First Reading of **Ordinance No. 507**, an Ordinance to revise Section 230.21.1 B of the Zoning Code of the City of New Castle to: (1) Make Stand Alone Multi-Family Dwelling Development Projects in the Downtown Gateway Zoning District Permissible Only with the Grant of a Special Exception from the Board of Adjustment; and (2) require Planning Commission Review and Recommendation for all Special Exception Applications in the Downtown Gateway Zoning District.

President Ratchford stated that Council has been discussing this Ordinance for several meetings, and decided to get more information.

William Barthel explained that Council had appointed a group to perform a comprehensive review of the DDD Ordinance and make recommendations. There were specific concerns about multi-family units and Multi-family units with mixed uses within the Downtown District.

The review group are suggesting that multi-family units and Multi-family units with mixed uses be made special exceptions within the code.

Mr. Losco stated making a special exception for large multi-family projects will channel those projects through the Board of Adjustment. This would be an opportunity for citizen and Council input, and if appropriate, placing conditions on the project.

Mr. Barthel stated that this would be the first reading of the Ordinance, it would then be sent to the Planning Commission for review, it would be posted for 15 days, and then it would come back to Council with the Planning Commission's recommendations for a Public Hearing and 2nd reading of the Ordinance. These meetings will also be posted for 15 days.

President Ratchford read the Ordinance.

The Motion to adjourn was made by Councilperson Megginson, seconded by Councilperson Vannucci and passed unanimously. Council adjourned at 6:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly Burgmuller  
Council Secretary